

Nebraska Information Technology Commission

Community Technology Fund

**Technology Innovation Grants for Economic
Revitalization (TIGER)**

2005 Guidelines

Purpose of the Grant

The Nebraska Information Technology Commission announces the Community Technology Fund Technology Innovation Grants for Economic Revitalization (TIGER), a competitive matching mini grant program. The Community Technology Fund promotes the effective and efficient use of information technology in Nebraska communities. The Community Technology Fund of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission was created by state statute (Section 86-1512). TIGER mini grants target the use of information technology to enhance economic development in Nebraska communities.

Dates

Applications must be received via e-mail by 5:00 p.m. CT September 1, 2005.

Awards will be announced in November 2005. The award period will run from January 16, 2006 to January 15, 2007.

Eligibility and Award Information

Funding Availability and Size of Awards

It is anticipated that approximately \$20,000 will be available for competitive grants. The range of grant awards is expected to be \$1,000-\$5,000. Grant requests for more than \$5,000 will not be considered.

Eligible Entities

Only public entities in Nebraska are eligible for Community Technology Fund grants. Public entities are defined as entities that can collect taxes and/or their subdivisions.

Unsatisfactory performance of an applicant under prior Community Technology Fund awards may result in that applicant's proposal not being considered for funding.

Funding Priority

TIGER promotes the use of information technology to enhance economic development. Priority will be given to applications which demonstrate strong economic development benefits.

Eligible/Ineligible Activities and Costs

Activities which support economic development through the use of information technology are eligible for funding unless otherwise restricted by law or regulation.

Salaries or stipends are eligible if they are necessary for the implementation of the overall project. Equipment costs and transmission costs are eligible if they are necessary for the implementation of the overall project.

Buildings, rents, non-telecommunications utilities, food and beverages, and indirect costs are *ineligible* for grant funds but may be used as the match. Payment of staff or consultants to develop proposals is also a nonallowable cost.

Match Requirement

A minimum match of 20 percent of the total project cost is required. The match may be a cash match, an in-kind match, or a combination of the two. An in-kind match can include time, people, machines, buildings, rent, and utilities. Project partners must be able to provide their match requirement with currently available resources. Projects which do not meet the required match will not be considered for funding.

Projects which are funded will be required to document both cash and in-kind matches. Acceptable documentation of an in-kind match include:

- Copies of sign-in sheets for volunteers or other records of volunteer hours.
- A signed letter from an employee's supervisor indicating that he/she has contributed a specified number of hours working on the project.
- A signed letter from the appropriate supervisor/director documenting the use of facilities and equipment.

Award Period

Projects must be completed within 12 months of the initial receipt of funds. The award period will run from January 16, 2006 to January 15, 2007.

Procedures

Assistance in Preparing Applications

In order to facilitate the preparation of Community Technology Fund TIGER applications, a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and tips are available on the NITC Web Site (<http://www.nitc.state.ne.us>). Information on the Community Technology Fund TIGER program can be accessed directly at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/cc/grants/>.

Submission of Applications

Application Form. The application form is available at <http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/cc/grants/>. Applicants may download the form or duplicate it on their own word processor or spreadsheet program. Applicants are asked to submit both electronic and paper copies of the application, including the budget.

Electronic Submission. An electronic copy should be e-mailed to Anne Byers at abyers@notes.state.ne.us as a Word, WordPerfect, OpenOffice, Rich Text Format (RTF), HTML or PDF attachment. Budgets can be submitted in any of the formats listed above or as Excel documents. An electronic copy may also be submitted on a disk if an applicant does not have e-mail. If an applicant is unable to submit an electronic copy, please contact Anne Byers at (402) 471-3805 in advance. In the event of a network outage, please contact Anne Byers at (402) 471-3805 and fax a copy of the application to (402) 471-4608.

Deadline. Electronic applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. CT, Sept. 1, 2005. Receipt of applications will be confirmed. A list of applications received will also be available on the Community Technology Fund TIGER section of the NITC Web site (<http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/cc/grants/>).

Application Review Process

The completed application forms will be reviewed NITC staff for compliance with minimum eligibility requirements. Ineligible applications will be returned to the applicant with an explanation and recommendation for improving the document.

As part of the technical review, the Technical Panel will approve Community Technology Fund reviewers. Reviewers will include members of the Community Council, Technical Panel and/or their designees, and NITC staff. Other professionals working in the fields of community development and information technology may also serve as committee members.

Eligible applications will be reviewed using the evaluation criteria listed below.

| Evaluation Criteria | Maximum Score |
|---|----------------------|
| Project Description and Goals | 10 points |
| Project Team and Project Activities | 10 points |
| Expected Outcomes and Economic Benefits | 30 points |
| Implementation Timeline | 10 points |
| Sustainability | 10 points |
| Project Evaluation | 10 points |
| Technical Evaluation | 10 points |
| Budget | 10 points |
| Total | 100 points |

The Community Council may be asked to make recommendations regarding project funding to the Nebraska Information Technology Commission.

A summary of the project evaluations, the technical review conducted by the Technical Panel, and any recommendations of the Community Council will be presented to the Nebraska Information Technology Commission. The Nebraska Information Technology Commission will make the final decision regarding project funding.

Contractual Agreement

Grant recipients are required to enter into a contractual agreement with the Nebraska Information Technology Commission.

Drug Free Work Place Policy

Recipients are also required to submit a copy of their Drug Free Work Place Policy.

Disbursement of Funds

Due to the small amount of the awards and the small number of grants that can be awarded, the disbursement schedule will be negotiated with each grantee to minimize administrative burden while providing adequate oversight. For projects involving the purchase of equipment from one or two vendors, disbursement will be made upon submission of invoices. For projects for which this method of disbursement would not be practical, funds will be disbursed in two to three installments. Disbursements after the initial disbursement will require the submission of a financial report including receipts or invoices of all expenditures made with grant funds and documentation of cash and in-kind matches. All grantees will be required to submit financial reports, including receipts or invoices of all expenditures made with grant funds and documentation of cash and in-kind matches.

Reporting Requirements

Grant recipients will be required to submit a progress report every six months until the project is completed. It is the expectation of the Nebraska Information Technology Commission that no project will require more than 12 months to complete.

The first progress report will be due June 16, 2006. If a complete financial report has not been submitted, the progress report must also include a complete and current accounting. This accounting should include receipts or invoices of all expenditures made with grant funds and documentation of cash and in-kind matches. A copy of materials created from this project to date should also be submitted.

A full report, detailing the results of the project will be required by January 15, 2007. If a complete financial report has not been submitted, the progress report must also include a complete and current accounting. This accounting should include receipts or invoices of all expenditures made with grant funds and documentation of cash and in-kind matches. A copy of materials created from this project should also be submitted. This information will be publicized across the state so that everyone can benefit from the work supported by Community Technology Fund TIGER funds.

Amendments to the Agreement

Requests to amend the agreement must be received in writing by the Nebraska Information Technology Committee. Requests to which substantially change the scope of the project will be brought before the Community Council for approval.

Right to Audit

The NITC reserves the right to audit any and all grant projects for a period of 2 years after project completion.

For More Information

For further information, please contact:

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